

Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians
Statement on Wearing Face Masks to Slow Spread of COVID-19
Approved by the WAFP Executive Committee on July 9, 2020

With the continued spread of COVID-19 in our state and across the country, the Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians supports the continued and expanded use of face masks. The proper use of face masks is vital to slowing the spread and avoiding further illness.

Family physicians play an important role in promoting the use of facemasks and combating the disease within their communities. The WAFP supports the CDC recommendations that everyone wear a [cloth face mask when in public spaces](#). In addition to wearing face masks, we encourage all of our members and the general public to continue to refer to the CDC and [your local public health department](#) for [current guidance on the use of masks](#), as there may be important regional differences in physical distancing and other regulations.

Some important reminders about virus safety and the use of face masks:

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- Cloth face masks may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others.
- CDC recommends that people wear cloth face mask in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
 - Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face mask is not a substitute for physical distancing.
 - Cloth face masks should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Non-healthcare workers should NOT use a face mask meant for a healthcare worker. Surgical masks and N95 respirators are critical supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and first responders.